

APPENDIX D

CALIFORNIA CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINE

USERS' SURVEY

As part of its quadrennial review of the California Child Support Guideline, the California Judicial Council, through an independent contractor, is administering surveys to a wide range of parents and practitioners to learn their opinions about the Guideline. Your answers will help us make recommendations to the Legislature that they can then use to develop a Guideline that most effectively meets the needs of parents and their children.

Please be assured that your responses are completely confidential and will not be identified with you individually. Please return your completed survey by **September 25, 2000 to David Price; Policy Studies Inc.; 999 18th Street, Suite 900; Denver, CO 80202**. A stamped return envelope is provided for your convenience. If you have access to the Internet, you may respond to this survey on line at www.childsupportsurvey.com/california.asp instead of returning the survey in the mail.

1. Please tell us how fair or unfair you believe the California Child Support Guideline is _____.
(Please circle one number for each statement.)

	Very Fair	Somewhat Fair	Somewhat Unfair	Very Unfair	Don't Know
a. To the noncustodial parent/payor?	4	3	2	1	9
b. To the custodial parent/payee?	4	3	2	1	9
c. To the children for whom support is awarded?	4	3	2	1	9
d. To the children from other relationships?	4	3	2	1	9

2. In your opinion, does the California Child Support Guideline result in child support orders that are....

- 1 - Too high?
- 2 - About right?
- 3 - Too low?
- 9 - Don't know/no opinion

3. Based on your experience, what are the most frequent reasons courts deviate from the Guideline in establishing child support orders?

4. What problems have you experienced in using the California Child Support Guideline to establish or modify child support orders?

5. Please tell us how adequately you believe the Guideline deals with the following issues. (*Please circle one number for each statement.*)

	Very Adequate	Adequate	Inadequate	Very Inadequate	Don't Know
a. Cases in which the mother or father has a support order for children from a prior or subsequent relationship	4	3	2	1	9
b. Adjustments for additional natural or adopted children living in the mother or father's home (but not step-children, unless a court order established a legal responsibility)	4	3	2	1	9
c. Adjustments for spousal support	4	3	2	1	9
d. Adjustments for sharing physical custody	4	3	2	1	9
e. High income cases	4	3	2	1	9
f. Provisions for calculating the <u>net</u> income of both parents	4	3	2	1	9
g. Low income cases (i.e., cases where the obligor's monthly net disposable income is less than \$1,000)	4	3	2	1	9
h. Work or education-related child care costs for children who are the subject of the support being ordered.	4	3	2	1	9
i. Work or education-related child care costs for children from other relationships	4	3	2	1	9
j. Health insurance expenses	4	3	2	1	9
k. Cases in which the income of the noncustodial parent is unknown	4	3	2	1	9

6. The California Child Support Guideline computes child support using the *net* disposable income of both parents. Some people would like to see the Guideline changed to use *gross* income. (Please circle one response to each of the following three questions.)

a. In my opinion, it is easier to use _____ income to compute child support obligations.

Gross income	Net disposable Income	Both are equally easy	Don't know/ No opinion
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b. In my opinion, it is more equitable to use _____ income to compute child support obligations.

Gross income	Net disposable Income	Both are equally equitable	Don't know/ No opinion
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c. I believe child support obligations should use _____ income to compute child support obligations.

Gross income	Net disposable Income	Other	Don't know/ No opinion
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7. The California Child Support Guideline allows a low income adjustment when the obligor's monthly net disposable income is less than \$1,000 per month. What, if any, changes would you like to see made to this Guideline provision?

8. The Guideline gives some general directives regarding second family situations; that is, children the obligor or obligee has a duty to support but who are not covered by a child support order. What, if any, changes would you make to the Guideline to deal with the following situations?

a. The obligor or obligee has a second family with children who are not living in that parent's household and that parent is paying voluntary (not court-ordered) support for those children. The Guideline currently provides for a deduction from income for any voluntary support actually being paid but not to exceed the amount established by the Guideline.

- b. The obligor or obligee has a subsequent intact family unit with children who are being directly supported by that parent while residing in that parent's household. The Guideline currently provides for a maximum hardship deduction in this circumstance but not to exceed the support allocated each child for whom support is being calculated.

9. In your opinion, what are the strengths of the California Child Support Guideline? *(List up to 3)*

10. In your opinion, what are the weaknesses of the California Child Support Guideline? *(List up to 3)*

11. For what types of families do you think the California Child Support Guideline is.....

- a. particularly helpful?

- b. particularly difficult?

The following questions are asked for statistical purposes only.

12. Which of the following categories best describes your position?

- 01 - Judge/Commissioner/Referee
- 02 - Family law facilitator
- 03 - Private family law attorney
- 04 - IV-D agency attorney
- 05 - Private child support specialist (non-attorney)
- 06 - IV-D Child support specialist (non-attorney)
- 07 - Advocate for custodial parents
- 08 - Advocate for noncustodial parents
- 09 - Advocate for children
- 10 - Legal Aid representative
- 11 - Academic
- 98 - Other (*please specify*) _____

13. For how many years have you worked with cases that need child support orders established/modified?

- 1 - 2 years or less
- 2 - More than 2 but no more than 5 years
- 3 - More than 5 but no more than 10 years
- 4 - More than 10 years
- 9 - Don't know/can't remember

14. Please identify the county in which you work _____

| *Thank you for completing this survey. Feel free to attach additional comments to the survey.*

